Whatever You'll Give

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Whatever You'll Give

by NeuroWriter14

Summary

Will and Hannibal die falling over the cliff only for Hannibal to wake up in his younger body.

Notes

See the end of the work for notes

Hannibal looked down at Will who was walking at his side. Will was shorter than him now, only coming up to his hip. He was significantly shorter than the man Hannibal knew. The man Hannibal loved. The man he lost. Hannibal remembered falling over the cliff. He remembered death. And in death, he had caught a glimpse of Will, dead alongside him. He had expected some kind of afterlife, maybe even Hell. But what he found instead was as he reached for Will, wanting to embrace him one last time, he was suddenly dragged away. He woke up in his 16-year-old body then, the acceptance letter to Johns Hopkins sitting on his bedside table. That was about a year ago now.

He went to Johns Hopkins, repeating the path he had started down so many years ago. He knew that path would eventually lead him to Will, many years down the road. But he couldn't wait that long.

After a year, he managed to negotiate a way to earn credit while at another university. All the while, he moved to Louisiana. His motives were far purer than they had ever been. He just wanted to know Will, in some form, any form. He wanted to love him, even if it was just platonically. He wanted to be there, be someone Will could trust and turn to. He wanted to be the support he knew Will never had in his life until he was an adult. He wanted to ensure that Will didn't grow up hating himself the way he had in the past, and the way Hannibal knew he was headed once again.

Finding Will had been easy. Part of him hoped, a secret part, that whatever happened to him, happened to Will as well. That somehow, he had woken up in his younger body as well. But when Hannibal found him, and his father, Will had no memory of him. He was a stranger for all intents and purposes to Hannibal. And he forced himself to accept that. Even at a young age, Will was incredibly astute. He seemed to realize that Hannibal had an aching hole in his heart but never prodded or pressed. Instead, he watched him with round, ocean eyes that were wise beyond his years and now and then would lean forward to wrap his arms around Hannibal's waist.

Will's father had been glad for the extra help when Hannibal offered it under the guise of a teenager trying to earn some experience. Will's father was hesitant at first, unable to pay Hannibal when he said he didn't need it. In fact, he was quite well off as it was. His scholarships covered his tuition and his aunt and uncle were both still alive. The Lecter fortune, of which there was still plenty, belonged to him at his point. Eventually, Will's father relented, grateful for the help.

Hannibal spent almost every day with Will once his father allowed it. A job threatened to pull them apart, both of them reluctant to part when Will's father asked if Will could stay with Hannibal. He was more than happy to accept and for the better part of a few months, Will had been occupying the other bedroom of Hannibal's apartment. He was determined that he would return to Baltimore at some point, maybe far enough into the future that Will was in university himself, but for now, he was content where he was.

That was, anyway, as long as Will was content with him around.

One day, Will came back from school looking more sullen than normal. Hannibal had always been used to the way he carried himself, but this was different. He greeted him, finding Will's brows furrowed in thought.

"What is it?" Hannibal asked.

"It's Halloween tomorrow."

Hannibal understood immediately.

"We should find you a costume."

Will's brows shot into his hair. "You don't-"

Hannibal silenced him with a look.

He already knew that Will was always the new kid in school, never stayed anywhere long enough to really set up roots when he was younger. This was the longest he had ever stayed anywhere, and it was mostly due to Hannibal's intervention. Along with that, he had never truly had any childhood experiences, among those trick or treating.

Hannibal didn't grow up with Halloween either, but his time in America as an adult filled in some of the gaps for him. But Will had always grown up around Halloween, and while his adult self didn't seem to care much for holidays, he did as a child. Even though he was always apart from his peers, in fact just as he had as an adult he really only opened up to Hannibal, some part of him still longed for some semblance of normalcy, likely to combat the darker tendencies that would sometimes flash through his eyes, even at such a young age.

And Hannibal was happy to oblige him.

They had been walking around for an hour now, Will dressed as some kind of monster. Hannibal always liked the idea of Halloween. It gave people a chance to wear masks that embodied their inner selves. People often wore masks as it was. Halloween was the one day that the masks became better reflections of themselves. Part of him ached that Will thought himself a monster at such a young age. The two of them moved from house to house, Will knocking on the door and looking up with such earnest, round eyes that Hannibal felt the insane need to drag him away and wrap him in blankets to protect him.

They moved from house to house, people cooing over Will and smiling at Hannibal.

By the end of the night, Will had enough candy to give an elephant a sugar rush and an exhausted but happy small smile on his face.

Several Years Later

"Hannibal, I'm home."

He never grew tired of hearing that. Will walked around the corner and into the kitchen when he was currently preparing their meal for the night. Hannibal was up to his elbows in the

making of pumpkin pie. Will walked toward him, a grin on his face.

"Busy I see."

"Never too busy for you."

Will came to stand behind him, wrapping his arms around Hannibal's waist and pressing his cheek between Hannibal's shoulder blades. It was a surprisingly comfortable position, especially given that he was thankful for any contact between him and Will. Part of him, even after all these years, ached for the man he had known and loved. But this Will was nearly identical in almost every way. Except for one.

He didn't neglect his darker urges. Hannibal had carefully cultivated the darker parts of Will, much gentler than he had the first time. The result was a brutal, ruthless, and beautiful killer who grew in tandem with Hannibal's own monster.

He honestly hadn't expected anything physical to ever occur between them. He was content to have Will in whatever way he would give himself as he became an adult. Yet Will had stuck by his side. Will was the one who changed their relationship. He hadn't expected how Will would be in his teen years, and apparently he was far more easily wound up than Hannibal ever thought. Will spent the majority of his late teens trying to coax Hannibal into a physical relationship, using the same strategy Hannibal had seen when he had been trying to lure him into a trap with the FBI. Will's motives were far less pure as a teenager than the vengeance he had been after as an adult.

It was only on Will's 18th birthday that Hannibal had finally relented and given them what they had both wanted, Hannibal for far longer than Will ever knew. Hannibal had moved to Baltimore after Will graduated, and Will went with him. Even though it was over an hour's drive to Will's university every day, he didn't seem to mind. Hannibal bought the same house he had originally along with the office.

This was the life had wanted before when it came to Will. He had wanted this intimacy, he had wanted them to share their kills. He had wanted Will to be his in every way. And now he was. Only Hannibal wasn't the man he had been when he first wanted Will for himself. His heart still ached for something he was so close to having and yet never truly possessed. But it was also overwhelmed at all times, waking up to find a head of dark curls pressed against his chest.

Will pressed a kiss between his shoulder blades. "It's Halloween." He murmured.

"It is."

"Do you remember our first Halloween?"

"I could never forget."

"Is this what you wanted then?"

Hannibal turned, finding it slightly difficult while Will still held him but he managed. "I just wanted to know you. In whatever way you would let me."

Will pressed forward then, their lips meeting.

He pulled the other again him, wary of his messy hands. He was strangely content like this. Just having Will. His Will.

End Notes

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